

STAT

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A9THE NEW YORK TIMES
11 April 1980

Russian Who Returned Accuses C.I.A. of a Plot

MOSCOW, April 10 (Reuters) — A Soviet ballet dancer who defected to the United States and then returned home was quoted by the Soviet press today as having said that American intelligence officers tried to enlist him as a spy.

Yuri Stepanov, 32 year old, formerly a member of the Moscow Classical Ballet, said C.I.A. officers posing as members of an international church group asked him questions about tanks and rockets once they learned he had served in the Soviet Army.

When they realized he knew no secrets, they decided to use him as a pawn in "the campaign of anti-Soviet hysteria," the Government newspaper Izvestia said.

Mr. Stepanov sought asylum in the United States in January when his troupe was touring Italy. But after joining the New Jersey Ballet, he asked Soviet authorities to allow him to return home.

He flew to Moscow April 1 after American officials had interviewed him in the presence of Soviet representatives.

According to Izvestia, Mr. Stepanov said he had defected not for political reasons but because he felt his dancing talent was unjustly underrated at home.